

OCTOBER 2, 1977

E. HOWARD HUNT SUES HIS WATERGATE LAWYER

WASHINGTON, Oct. 1—E. Howard Hunt Jr. filed a civil suit yesterday against his former attorney, charging him with legal malpractice and asking for \$10 million in damages.

In the suit filed in Federal District Court here, Mr. Hunt charged that his former attorney, William O. Bittman, and the law firm of which Mr. Bittman was then a member had "negligently represented" him despite a payment of \$156,000 in legal fees.

Mr. Hunt, one of the original defendants in the Watergate case, pleaded guilty in 1973 to six counts of burglary, conspiracy and wiretapping. His later motion to withdraw the guilty plea was denied. He was released from prison last February after serving 32 months of a prison term of 30 months to eight years.

In his suit, Mr. Hunt charged that Mr. Bittman and the firm of Hogan & Hartson had disclosed confidential matters to third persons, failed to pursue avenues of investigation of matters vital to his defense and failed to disclose interests "which were in conflict with the interests of the plaintiff."

Mr. Bittman, who is now with a different firm, would not comment today on the suit. Rufus King, who now represents Mr. Hunt, would not elaborate on the specific nature of the complaints noted by Mr. Hunt in the suit.

Mr. Bittman represented Mr. Hunt from July 1972 until August 1973. There is a three-year statute of limitations on malpractice actions in the District of Columbia, but Mr. Hunt's new attorney apparently is trying to extend this by charging in the suit that Mr. Hunt did not become aware of the alleged "failures and defaults" by Mr. Bittman until October 1974.